

OBERLIN COLLEGE

BY THE HEIRS OF

WILLIAM GOODELL.

ADDRESS

READ AT THE

NEW-YORK STATE LIBERTY CONVENTION,

HELD AT

PORT BYRON,

ON WEDNESDAY AND THURSDAY, JULY 25 and 26, 1845.

To the Friends of the Enslaved—the Advocates of Equal Rights:

It is now more than twelve years since the existence, the criminality, the growth, and the aggressions of *chattel slavery* in our boasted Republic have been topics of constant agitation by a large and increasing class of our citizens, distinctly avowing their deep convictions of its horrible wickedness, and pledging their best endeavors for its speedy and entire abolition.

Convinced of the utter incompatibility of this system with the preservation of republican freedom, and finding it impracticable to wield their elective franchise in accordance with their convictions while connected with the old parties looking to slaveholders for support, it was thought necessary, by a portion of Abolitionists, more than five years ago, to disconnect themselves from the old parties, and organize anew, for the support of such candidates of their own selection as they could consistently and safely constitute the representatives of their principles—the advocates of their measures.

The course of events, since that time, has confirmed, fully, the views with which this step was taken, and has convinced large numbers of the necessity of coming into the measure. It is becoming daily more evident that no party not distinctly pledged to the abolition of slavery, holding it as an object on no consideration to be compromised, and under no possible circumstances to be postponed for other objects, can ever be depended upon for the accomplishment

of such a work. And notwithstanding the *local* professions of one of the old parties, on the eve of pending elections, (and for the purpose of uniting the North and the South in the support of slaveholders,) it is now admitted by those organs of that party who were most loud in claiming our support, that *the general abolition of slavery HAS NEVER entered into the plan of their operations*, but only the restricting of the slave power to its *present field of domination*.*

The Liberty party, therefore, as the *only* party pledged to the abolition of chattel slavery, occupies a ground exclusively and wholly its own. So far as *this* subject is concerned, it has no rival in the political field, and can confidently challenge the support of those who are intent on securing that sublime object. But large numbers who seem to be desirous of quitting the parties subservient to slavery, and of wielding the elective franchise for its removal, are fearful of casting in their lot with a party whose creed of *political economy*, in other respects, is not more distinctly defined. It is in vain that we point out to them the pecuniary burdens resulting directly from the slave system, and inflicted by a petty oligarchy of about two hundred and fifty thousand slaveholders (less than one sixty-eighth part of the nation.) upon the rest of our seventeen millions of inhabitants. It is in vain that we run over the inventory of its exorbitant exactions—its expensive purchases of

*Vide New-York Tribune.

slave territory—its Florida wars—its protracted foreign diplomacy for the better security of slave property—its capricious and fitful changes of national policy, with all the commercial losses inevitably resulting from our intercourse with the slaveholding States. Whatever we may exhibit of statistical information on these topics, they continue to regard us as having cultivated an acquaintance with only this *one* subject, or as being ready to disregard all *other* sources of public mischief, in our exclusive attention to the *one* that has absorbed, for so long a time, our earnest regard. They fear that an administration guided by our councils, would leave our country exposed to evils as great, or perhaps greater, than those we seek to remove, while directing our attention to only one point. The very fact that we have left the old parties, and have united together on a new basis, totally distinct from both of them, confirms them in this estimate of our position. And there are not wanting those who represent us as holding that the entire functions of civil government are wrapped up in the "*one idea*" of abolishing chattel slavery, so that in our endeavors to secure the liberation of the slave, we should feel ourselves quite at liberty to compromise the rights of the free!—and that in our eagerness to disarm the aristocracy of the South, we should readily enter into compromises and alliances with a rival and growing aristocracy of the North—confining our regards to the poor and oppressed colored man at a distance, and averting our eyes from the wants and the wrongs of the poor white man at our own door.

The course of events has brought us to a point at which these misapprehensions should be forever removed. Our true position should be so clearly defined that there could be no room for mistake; and the friends of equal and impartial liberty for all men, irrespective of color or condition, should not fail to see in the Liberty party, at the first glance, the very party, and the *only* one, in this country, in the hands of which the essential rights of *any* portion of our fellow-citizens could be safe.

To this object then, (passing by other interesting topics of remark,) we confine ourselves on the present occasion, setting forth *our own* views of the proper course for the Liberty party to pursue—inviting the members of that party to consider and determine upon its fitness—and asking the friends of republican liberty and of the enslaved, every where, whether this be not the *true ground* on which *all* true friends of human progress should meet and lift up their banner.

I. POSITION OF THE LIBERTY PARTY HITHERTO.

We admit freely, as the truth requires us to admit, that, in the first organization of the Liberty party, under the pressure of the extraordinary and unforeseen causes that led to that measure, the members of that party, composed as they were of men trained and educated in the old rival parties, did not stop to elaborate in detail a creed of political economy embracing the topics commonly prominent in other political

creeds. They were not *then* in the best condition to do so, nor was it the *first* work for them to perform. Not a few of them had hopes that a temporary organization, by wielding a "*balance of power*" (sought in vain by the "*questioning of candidates*,") would force one or both of the old parties into a compliance with their wishes, and secure the abolition of slavery without further delay. A still greater number, perhaps, felt confident that when the aggressions and depredations of the slave power were fully revealed, all honest and right minded men would rally at once for its overthrow, giving the Liberty party a glorious but brief struggle, and leaving its members at leisure, or disbanding, to go back into such *old* or *new* political organizations as might then exist, or which, in their various estimates, the times might seem to require. It can not be charged upon them, either as a crime, or as an evidence of any peculiar want of political sagacity, that they did not *then* so distinctly perceive as they *now* must, that all the aristocratic influences that could be combined together, from all sects and parties, ecclesiastical and political, would be systematically wielded against all earnest measures, whether political or moral, for the abolition of American slavery; that they did not then *foresee*, what they have now *learned*, that the grand Bastile of American oppression, despising all sudden assaults, is to be reduced only by a regular and protracted siege, in which they must gird on all their armor, and add patience to courage.

Pereceiving, as they must *now* do, that the poison has penetrated every pore and artery of the body politic, they must adapt their remedies to the inveteracy of the disease. The Liberty party, as a permanent organization, and asking, as such, the control of the National affairs, can not fail to be asked with resistless importunity, as it advances step by step, what *use* it will make of the power committed to its hands, on those points (of secondary importance it may be) with which the public mind must continue to be in some measure engrossed. Its position, therefore, on those points, must of necessity be defined more definitely than it has yet been done. And the history of other parties has shown the imprudence of deferring to a very late day, so important a task. The policy of *non-committal* may suit the objects of some politicians, but not those of wise statesmen, confiding in an intelligent people.

And the hazardous double game of holding out *opposite* allurements to opposite classes of citizens, has seldom proved successful enough, in our times, to receive even the low praise of *prudence* from those whose course is not governed by nobler motives. The advantage of retaining the names and the votes of those who misapprehend our position would be purchased at too high a price. And nothing could be more perplexing than to find one set of political maxims passing currently in some portions of the Liberty party, and the opposite in others. Neutrality is no position at all; and if it were it could not be ours. Our character is not *made* up of mere negatives. It is positive: and silence, if it be sometimes a virtue, does not

thrive well with those who are constantly called to assert the right of free speech. Silent nor neutral, on questions of political economy and public interest, *we shall not be*: the only question is—*What shall we speak?* Have we principles which can be translated into measures? Are those principles exact and comprehensive enough to solve *all* the questions arising in political life?

The archives of the Liberty party, circumscribed though they are, very happily are not bare of materials from which may be gathered the germ of its future destination. A few brief extracts from its records will suffice to show this.

OUR FIRST NATIONAL CONVENTION.

The first National Liberty Convention held at Albany, April 1, 1840, adopted the resolutions that follow:

"Resolved, That while we consider the ABOLITION OF SLAVERY as paramount to all other questions of national politics, and have nominated and expect to nominate AND TO ELECT, with a special view to this vital question; *we by no means lose sight of numerous other questions, in which all who are to be affected directly or indirectly by our government are deeply interested, and we consider that OUR FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLE, to wit, that ALL MEN within its jurisdiction are, AS MEN, entitled to an EQUAL PARTICIPATION in the benefits of our government, does decide all these questions in favor of the general good, by deciding them in favor of the widest and largest LIBERTY that can flourish under JUST LAWS.*

"Resolved, That, as Abolitionists, it is our duty, and as American citizens it is the duty of all, instead of supporting a first, second, or third party, to RISE ABOVE ALL PARTY, and unite as patriots, philanthropists, and Christians, to put down the slavery of all parties, and put up the PRINCIPLES of the Declaration of Independence, at the ballot-box, and every where else, by every lawful constitutional, moral, and religious influence."

In another resolution the Convention characterized slavery as—

"Generating the prevalence of selfishness over public spirit, and therefore utterly inconsistent with the *called purposes of free government.*"

And in a resolution announcing the names of their candidates for President and Vice-President, they speak of them as—

"Firmly devoted to the PRINCIPLES of HUMAN RIGHTS, and capable of applying them discreetly and efficaciously for the ABOLITION of SLAVERY, and for the promotion of ALL OUR OTHER PUBLIC INTERESTS, as far as the offices to which we would call them constitutionally permit," &c.

SECOND NATIONAL CONVENTION.

The second National Liberty Convention, held in the city of New-York, May 12 and 13, 1841, discussed and adopted an elaborate ADDRESS, which occupied nearly nine long newspaper columns, of which two full columns were devoted to the subject of political economy. And if all the details of its future policy, as a political party, were not fully matured, the necessity of doing so at some future time was distinctly recognized, the PRINCIPLES by which that policy should be moulded were developed with much prominence, and not a few pregnant indications and specimens of the application of those principles were, even then, at that early day, with precision laid down. A brief abstract from this document must suffice us here.

In reply to the then rising inquiry, what course the Liberty party would be likely to pursue in respect to the other great interests "commonly supposed to have no manner of connection with the principles of human rights, as involved in the slave question," the Convention suggested, in the first place, that the full adjustment might be "left open for future consideration" and decided by the party "in the light of its ever increasing wisdom, under the guidance of a wise course of experimental endeavors." They answered, (and very truly) in the second place, that "the great pecuniary, financial and money interests of the country" were more deeply affected by slavery, than by any of the other causes in debate between the old parties. They answered, in the third place, that the overthrow of the slave power would remove the chief obstacle in the way of a harmonious and permanent adjustment of the controverted questions, and put an end to those never-ending changes and fluctuations, so capriciously, yet systematically inflicted upon us, by that power. They answered in the fourth place, that many questions now earnestly contested would lose all their significance and could never again be revived, if a system of free labor should prevail over the whole country. They answered, in the fifth place, that "the GREAT DOCTRINE of HUMAN RIGHTS, as involved in the question of abolition, in other words, the *fundamental principles of HUMAN EQUALITY, JUSTICE, MERCY, HUMANITY*, regard for human nature as such, irrespective of factitious and artificial distinctions and in opposition to arbitrary and aristocratic claims, THESE (the very elements and life blood of abolitionism,) comprise not only the BEST but the ONLY SURE STANDARD and TEST, by which all the apparently subordinate and doubtful questions of legislation and of political economy SHOULD BE DECIDED."

And under this head they added:

"It is only in the light of these GREAT PRINCIPLES (which no administration but an anti-slavery one will ever embrace or thoroughly understand,) that any clue can be found to those perplexing problems about which narrow-minded and mere selfish politicians so constantly wrangle, without ever settling them at all, or placing them upon any permanent or sure basis. The great END of human government is the PROTECTION of the RIGHTS of men, the preservation of the public peace and safety: and where this end is duly regarded, the advancement of the public property *can not but be secured on the most equitable and stable basis.* With out undertaking, therefore, to foretell precisely every public measure of political economy which a thoroughly abolitionized national administration would find it proper to adopt, we may venture to specify a few things which it would not do."

"It would not long remain silent or inactive, in its diplomatic relations, in respect to the *iniquitous Corn Laws of Great Britain*, by which the poor in one nation are made the victims of the lordly rapacity of those who should protect them, and by which the free agriculturists of another and a kindred nation are *debarred from using the natural market for their products.*"

"It would not solicitously seek, as an object of great public concernment and utility, either by the aid of a Sub-Treasury, a National Bank, or any other instrumentality or institution, devised for the purpose, an *artificial and forced 'equalization of exchanges'* between the free laboring North, and the spendthrift, dependent, and poverty stricken South, whereby the latter may be relieved from the disadvantages of their condition, by the manifest and gross robbery of the former."

"It would not shape its measures in conformity with the corrupt principle that *wealth* is the chief object of legislation, that its possession is the proof of merit, that its acquisition is the great end of national policy, to the promotion of which the social, intellectual, and moral interests of man may be innocently sacrificed."

"It would not plunge the country into needless, wicked, ruinous, and disgraceful wars, especially with the red men of the forest, on our frontiers. Least of all would it do this for the inglorious purpose of sending the hardy yeomanry of the North, at their own expense, and at the bidding of the slaveholder, on the bloodhound errand of scenting the track of fugitive slaves across the everglades of Florida, and kidnapping men, women, and children, for victims on the altar of slavery."

"In the expenditures of the Government, it would not burden the people with unnecessary appropriations, either for *extravagant salaries*, or for the maintenance of *magnificence*, and idle and anti-republican splendor and show."

"It would not violate the public morality, or invade human rights, on any plea of *State necessity*, however plausibly or importunately they might be urged. It would not favor or tolerate unjust or anti-republican MONOPOLIES of any kind, to make the rich richer and the poor poorer, in any department of political action."

"In the activities of state, county, township, village and city politics, the friends of impartial liberty and inalienable human rights, if true to their trust, will not fail to array themselves against those disgraceful and wicked arrangements through which *vice is licensed by law*, the morals of the people undermined by their professed and constitutional guardians, and *crime and pauperism created under authority of the State*, for the emolument of gamblers, vendors of strong drink, and other panders of vice."

Other portions of the same Address insisted that "the very object for which civil government was instituted among men" was "the defence of the poor and needy." And it carefully guarded against the idea that this defence was to be extended exclusively to those actually enslaved. It insisted that "whether power was to be exercised on a broad or on a narrow scale," a "regard for human rights" was the grand, the indispensable qualification for office—that "the UNFORTUNATE AND THE POOR IN OUR MIDST," (here, at the North,) "ought not to be put into the hands of those who look with contempt upon the slave," nor our sons placed under the direction of "path-masters who had not learned the important distinction between a laboring man and a working beast."

The same Address suggested the propriety of such a chance in the Constitution of the United States, as should "place the choice of President and Vice-President of the U. States in the hands of the people themselves, without the intervention of a College of Electors."

The Convention further said:

"In demanding the redress of the slave's wrongs, in the first place, as the great and paramount object of our political endeavors, we do not forget that there are OTHER wrongs to be redressed. But we select as most important, the case most palpable, and immeasurably the most grievous and pressing—the case of the incomprehending and the dumb, who cannot plead for themselves—the case of OTHERS as well as our own. In this way only can those who seek other and minor political reforms, evince either the sincerity, the impartiality, or the consistency of their demands."

"With this expose of their views, the Convention indulged the hope that, in the minds of reflecting and good men, they will not be thought to have lost sight of the various interests and objects, to which the attention of the patriot and the statesman should be directed in the activities of political life. If charged with being men of ONE IDEA in respect to public affairs, they ask that the com-

prehensiveness, and scope, and magnitude, of that one idea may be well guarded, weighed, appreciated, and understood. It is the idea that righteousness exalteth a nation, while sin is the reproach of any people. It is the idea that all human power is derived from the Creator of men, and unless wielded in conformity with his laws, must become a curse instead of a blessing to mankind. It is the idea that LAW is for the preservation of RIGHTS. It is the idea that GOD governs the world—that it is always good policy to do right, and bad policy to do wrong."

The same National Convention that issued this Address appointed a large committee of citizens of the State of New-York, as a "deputation to wait on the members of the Legislature now in session, and urge the passage of the bills now pending for the repeal of the nine months law, and for amending the Constitution in reference to the right of suffrage;" [so as to extend the right to our colored fellow-citizens on the same terms as to the whites.]

The same Convention passed a vote of thanks to Joshua Leavitt for his statistical tables and memorial to Congress, "praying the adoption of measures to secure an equitable and adequate market for American wheat." And "on motion of C. Chamberlain, of Indiana, it was

"Resolved, That duty, patriotism, and humanity, call upon all Americans to unite heartily and fully in the effort to remove all oppressive laws, and to establish equal rights, and the impartial administration of justice throughout the land."

THIRD NATIONAL CONVENTION.

The third National Liberty Convention, held at Buffalo, August 30, 1843, adopted the following resolutions:

"Resolved, That the Liberty party has not been organized for any temporary purpose by interested politicians, but has arisen from among the people, in consequence of a conviction hourly gaining ground that no other party in the country represents truly the principles of American liberty and the true spirit of the Constitution of the United States."

"Resolved, That the Liberty party has not been originated merely for the overthrow of slavery. Its first and most decided effort must indeed be directed against slaveholding, as the grossest and most revolting form of despotism, but it will also carry out the principles of equal rights into all their practical consequences and applications, and support every just measure, conducive to social and individual freedom."

"Resolved, That the Liberty party is not a sectional party, but a National party, has NOT originated in a desire to accomplish a SINGLE object, but in a comprehensive regard to the interests of this whole country—is not a new party, or a third party, but is the party of 1776, reviving the PRINCIPLES of that memorable era, and striving to carry them into practical application."

N. Y. STATE CONVENTION, 1842.

The New-York State Liberty Convention held at New-York Mills, August 10, 1842, adopted and issued an Address, containing the paragraph that follows:

"In the bearing of economy on politics we shall be men of principle. One who invades rights in commercial, can hardly defend them in his political relations. Whatever goes to exalt one by the degradation of another we should frown upon. The poor, the desponding, the oppressed, these are our brethren, the world over. Let us spurn the thought of rising on their ruin."

MASSACHUSETTS, 1842.

An Address to the voters of Massachusetts, Nov. 8, 1842, contains the following:

"Vote for those only who stand disconnected from pro-slavery parties, and who will fearlessly carry out the fundamental principles of EQUAL RIGHTS IN ALL LEGISLATION."

OHIO STATE CONVENTION, 1842.

An Ohio State Liberty Convention, Jan. 4 and 5, 1842, issued, in its Address, the following :

"The creed of our fathers is our creed. Their faith is our faith. In our State legislation we desire a repeal of the oppressive laws which degrade the black without benefiting the white. We would encourage the colored people in virtue and knowledge by suitable legislative provisions. We therefore give to the breeze the banner of Constitutional Liberty. We inscribe on its folds Liberty, Equal Rights, Protection to Free Labor, Public Economy."

PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE.

JAMES G. BIRNEY, in his letter of acceptance of the nomination of the Liberty party, as its candidate for President of the U. States, dated Jan. 10, 1842, expresses himself thus :

"What is our object? Liberty. That Liberty that is the twin brother of Justice—the Liberty that respects and protects the rights, not of the weak only, or of the strong only, but of the weak and the strong, and simply because they are HUMAN RIGHTS."

ROCHESTER CONVENTION—MYRON HOLLEY.

The earliest incipient measures for local independent anti-slavery nominations, before any National Liberty party was organized, were strongly marked by similar features. The Monroe County (N. Y.) Convention for county nominations, held at Rochester, Sept. 28, 1839, adopted a series of resolutions and an Address prepared by Myron Holley, from which we extract the following :

"Resolved, That under a solemn conviction of the truth of the preceding resolutions, and with no other views than to restore and preserve the COMMON LIBERTIES OF THE NATION, including the poor as well as the rich, the SLAVE as well as the FREE, we now set up the political standard of EQUAL RIGHTS in our country, and commence our most earnest exertions to rally the nation under it, devoutly imploring the God of Freedom, our fathers' God, and our God, to give us and our fellow-citizens wisdom and power to sustain it, till its broad folds shall overspread and shelter every human being within our borders."

In their Address, the Convention said :

"Let a party of disinterested, intelligent, virtuous men be formed, taking the true ground of UNIVERSAL FREEDOM, UNIVERSAL JUSTICE, and EQUAL RIGHTS, and it will soon attract all the strong powers of the Union spirit to work in its behalf. It will compel good men to shake off their old party ties for the sake of joining it."

"Let us then form a new party—not for the purpose of defeating any proper object of either of the existing parties, but for uniting with all that is most valuable in the objects of both, the incomparably greater object of securing, with equal and paternal care, the UNIVERSAL RIGHTS and interests of all the States, and all the people of our glorious Union. Under the standard of such a party all the good may flock together, and find their common home."

PREVIOUS DISCUSSION.

The discussions which preceded and accompanied the organization of the Liberty party, were deeply imbued with the same spirit. Among the earliest paragraphs ever published, looking in the direction of a distinct political organization of abolitionists, was the following

from the pen of the lamented CHARLES FOLLEN :

"It becomes those who have not lost all sense of the dignity of human nature, to declare that they consider the PERSONAL RIGHTS OF MAN as the foundation of every other; and that they can not recognize any property which is inconsistent with that which every human being holds in his own soul and body. If there is ever to be in this country a party that shall take its character and name, not from particular liberal measures, or popular men, but from its uncompromising and consistent adherence to FREEDOM, a truly liberal and thoroughly republican party, it must direct its first decided effort against the grossest form, the most complete manifestation of oppression, AND HAVING TAKEN anti-slavery ground, it must carry out the principles of liberty in ALL ITS CONSEQUENCES. It must support every measure conducive to the greatest possible individual and social, moral, intellectual, religious, and civil freedom, whether that measure be brought forward by inconsistent slaveholders or consistent freemen. It must embrace the whole sphere of human action, watching and opposing the slightest illiberal, anti-republican tendency, and concentrating its whole force and influence against slavery itself, in comparison with which every other species of tyranny is tolerable, by which every other is strengthened and justified."

It is but just, in this connection, to present a paragraph of perhaps a still earlier date, from the pen of WILLIAM LLOYD GARRISON :

"We do indeed need a CHRISTIAN party in politics—not made up of this or that sect or denomination, but all who fear God and keep his commandments, and who sincerely desire to seek judgment and relieve the oppressed. I know it is the belief of many professing good men that they ought not to meddle with politics, but they are cherishing a delusion, which, if it do not prove fatal to their own souls, may prove the destruction of their country."—[Liberator, Dec. 20, 1834.]

By the side of these earliest hints concerning the organization of a true Liberty party, we may add what may be regarded as the summing up of the argument, about the time the measure was adopted :

"If we are to have organized political action, let us, in the first place, see well to it, that our association does not set up for its object any thing short of the ENTIRE object for which civil government was instituted, viz : to 'execute judgment between a man and his neighbor.' If abolitionists should make their own rights—or the rights of the SLAVES, even, their exclusive object, their hobby, to the neglect of other men's rights, and in forgetfulness of other great moral objects properly belonging to the department of civil government, they would lose their hold on the public confidence, they would belittle their enterprise, they would dwindle down to the stature of other political partizans, struggling, each, for their own objects—right, perhaps, in themselves—but too narrow for the great work for which God and humanity will hold all men accountable who undertake to wield the powers of civil government."—[Friend of Man, March 11, 1840.]

II. PRINCIPLES AND OBJECTS OF THE LIBERTY PARTY.

The objects for which the Liberty party was founded are thus definitely ascertained, by its own abundant declarations, and by the discussions which resulted in its organization. It was evidently based on PRINCIPLES and not on a MERE MEASURE OR MEASURES, though its prominent measures were, of course, distinctly announced, and sufficient minor exemplifications of them given, to illustrate their all-comprehensive scope and universally binding authority and obligation. Such principles thus announced by the Liberty party cannot but be regarded as a pledge, on its part, that the legitimate applica-

tion of those principles to all the proper objects and activities of civil government, shall not be wanting, as the appropriate occasions shall, from time to time, present themselves, in the progress of human affairs. And it is evident that any party failing to do this, would fail to occupy the field and the position for which civil government was designed. Not less evident is it that a party not intending to do whatever civil government is rightfully bound to do, degenerates into a mere faction, undeserving of public support.

The principles of the Liberty party, as already developed, may be happily expressed in the luminous language of Thomas Jefferson :

"The rightful power of all legislation is to declare and enforce only our natural rights and duties, and take none of them from us. No man has a natural right to commit aggressions on the equal rights of another, and this is all from which the law ought to restrain him. Every man is under a natural duty of contributing to the necessities of society, and this is all the law should enforce upon him. When the laws have declared and enforced all this, they have fulfilled their functions."—"The idea is quite unfounded that on entering into society, we give up any natural right."

The same principles are expressed in the Declaration of American Independence: "All men are created equal and are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights, among which are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." "To secure these rights, GOVERNMENTS are instituted among men." "To establish justice—and secure the blessings of LIBERTY," is the avowed and the grand object of the Constitution of the United States.

And this agrees with the Scriptures, which every where designate the business of civil government to be—"to execute judgment [i. e. justice,] between a man and his neighbor," as well as to "proclaim LIBERTY throughout the land, to ALL the inhabitants thereof."

III. APPLICATION OF THESE PRINCIPLES.

In the application of these simple principles to the current political topics of the day, it will be found that the party adopting them as its *authoritative rule of practice*, will be "thoroughly furnished to every good work" of a sound practical statesmanship, and will have little or no occasion to doubt or to hesitate in the disposition of any question of public policy or of political economy, that could be propounded for its solution.

EXPOSITION OF THE CONSTITUTION.

In the light of these principles, which were placed by our fathers at the *very basis* of our separate and independent existence, as a nation, and which form, of necessity, the corner stone of our AMERICAN CONSTITUTIONAL LAW, without which it has no significance, no meaning, nor even *existence*—we may readily understand and construe the Federal Constitution of 1787-9, into the *Preamble* of which the very same principles were incorporated, as a key to its meaning, and clothing it with all the authority it contains.

It is self-evident that if the Constitution be construed in *accordance* with those principles,

and understood as being *conformed* to them, there can be no constitutional or legal slavery in the United States. All men admit that slavery is the greatest possible violation of those principles, yet few seem to reflect that this admission, is, in reality, equivalent to a declaration that slavery is at war with the Constitution, or in other words, that there is no legal or constitutional slavery in the nation.

And as slavery is the greatest possible violation of the Constitution, there is manifestly no other duty devolving upon the Federal Government so obvious and palpably binding upon it, as the *abolition* of that slavery, unless the FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES, the GRAND OBJECT, and the LIVING SPIRIT of the Constitution is to be sacrificed to the MERE LETTER!

But if this ground should be taken, and if we should concede that the *strict letter* of the Constitution, rather than its grand scope and prevailing spirit, should be our guide in the construction of that instrument—if the testimony of contemporaneous history be accordingly set aside, and the dictionaries defining the meaning of words be resorted to, in its stead, it will be found that not a single word, syllable, or letter of the instrument recognizes even the existence of a slave, or of slavery, or makes the least guaranty, provision, or compromise on the subject.

It is by keeping out of sight the main object and living spirit of the Constitution, and at the same time presuming its intention to be something more and something *different* from any thing that is expressed in the strict letter of the instrument—that the claim of constitutional slavery can be admitted for a moment! The assumption is, that the framers of the Constitution intended what they were very careful *not* to express, and what at the same time was in manifest and direct opposition to the declared object and design they professed to have in view! Just as though the *people* could be bound to abide by the *secret intentions* of their servants who drafted an instrument for them, intentions not expressed in the instrument itself; and which they were careful to conceal! The Madison papers sometimes quoted in this discussion reveal to us the fact that the framers did *not* intend that the clause concerning "persons held to service and labor" should be understood as referring to slaves. In the first draft the word "servitude" had been employed, but "on motion of Mr. Randolph of Virginia, the word *servitude* was struck out, and the word *service* unanimously inserted, the former being thought (says Mr. Madison) to express the condition of slaves, and the latter the obligation of free persons."—[Madison Papers, v. III. p. 1569.]

By the strict letter and by the living spirit of the Constitution, "the United States shall guaranty to every State in this Union a republican form of government."—"No State shall pass any bills of attainder, or laws impairing the obligation of contracts;" and "no person shall be deprived of life, liberty or property, without due process of law." This latter provision, being an *amendment*, controls and sets aside whatever, in the original instrument, might seem to conflict with it. If the definitions of

Madison and Jefferson be correct, then no slaveholding State can be a republic. Slavery exists only by an attainder of blood, and by laws annulling the obligation of contracts; and not a single slave in the country was ever "deprived of liberty by due process of law." And "Congress shall have power to make all laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into execution the foregoing powers."

More than all this. The Declaration of independence, adopted prior to the Federal Constitution of 1787-9, by the original thirteen States, was equivalent to an act abolishing slavery in those States. The courts of Massachusetts have thus decided—and slavery in the other States rests on no firmer basis than it did in Massachusetts.

ANTI-SLAVERY ACTION.

A Liberty party in power, and holding these views, would consequently regard and treat *all* men as equal, extending the like protection to *all*. It would know no slaves, in law; holding all conflicting enactments and decisions to be unconstitutional, null and void. It would allow no kidnapping on our free soil. It would permit no officers or others to arrest persons as being fugitive slaves. It would punish as criminal the holding of slaves in any portion of the country. It would abolish slavery, not only in the District of Columbia and Territories, but throughout the United States. Nor is there the least danger that the slave States would even attempt to resist this action—in the presence of the slaves, by any resort to physical force, or even by withdrawing from the Union.

ELECTIVE FRANCHISE—FREE PEOPLE OF COLOR, &c.

The Liberty party, if true to its principles, will recognize the doctrine of POPULAR SOVEREIGNTY, and EQUALITY, every where, irrespective of *property or color*, regarding free access to the ballot-box, not as a mere *franchise*, to be contracted or expanded at the pleasure of those who are in power, but as an original and inherent *right*. It will know nothing of caste or of color. It will not legislate for colored men or for white, but simply for MEN. The right of voting, of jury trial, eligibility to office, liability to share in public burdens, will all follow the same equal rule. Men coming into the State of New-York, (for example) from the State of Virginia, whatever may be their hue, or their condition, whether they have been slaveholders, or slaves, will be treated in every respect like men coming from Massachusetts, or any other State. They will come to the ballot-box as soon in one case as in the other, and enjoy equal protection—agreeably to the express provisions of the Federal Constitution, itself, which knows nothing of slaves or of color, and makes no exception in their case when it says, (Art. IV. sec. 2, clause 1,) "*The citizens of each State shall be entitled to all the privileges and immunities of citizens of the several States.*"

Teachers of religion, too, equally with other men, white and colored, would, on the same principle, be subjected to all the liabilities and

burdens of other citizens, and clothed with the same eligibilities and privileges.

ANNEXATION OF TEXAS.

Their *fundamental principles*, unless relinquished, can not fail to guide and sustain the Liberty party in every possible exigency or problem arising out of the proposed, the probable, or even the consummated annexation of Texas to the United States. Such a measure, while pending, must of necessity be opposed by the members of that party. They can not receive to their fraternal embrace a nation with an anti-republican form of government, especially for the object of extending slavery. And besides this, they can not participate in the act of annexing to this nation *any* foreign nation at all. Their principles teach them that the functions of civil government are fulfilled when all the individual human beings comprised under it are secured in the enjoyment of their natural and original rights, unimpaired. Extent of territory, beyond the convenient exercise of these functions, *for them* has no charms. National aggrandizement, national glory, national power, are terms without desirable meaning in their vocabulary, beyond the simple judicial execution of justice between a man and his neighbor. Acquisition of foreign territory, whether by conquest, negotiation, or legislation, as it has no place in the Constitution of their country, or in their own conceptions of the business of a just and wise government, has no place in their political creed. The annexation of Texas, if it takes place, must be the *sole* work of the *opponents* of the Liberty party and of its creed.

But the Liberty party, while guided by its principles, is neither to be frightened nor cajoled out of its principles, nor diverted nor disheartened from the pursuit of its objects, and the steady promotion of its enterprise, by the danger or by the fact of annexation, from whatsoever quarter the clamor, the sophistry, or the consummated deed may come. In order to prevent an *addition* to our territory, (should the alternative ever be fairly presented, which it *HAS NOT*.) the LIBERTY party, while it remains such, can never assist in electing oppressors to rule over the territory that we now possess! So far as the slaves in Texas are concerned, it is only a question whether they shall be held in slavery under one government or under another! As little interest in the question have the slaves in this country, who are perhaps almost equally liable to be sold into Texas while that country is under its own government, as they would be were it incorporated into ours.

But were it otherwise, the Liberty party, guided by its principles, (which do not permit the choice between the two moral evils, nor the doing of evil that good may come,) could never consent to elect a wicked or unjust ruler, or to vote for the continuance of slavery in the Federal District and in the present American States, for the sake either of preventing the sale of American slaves into Texas, or of preventing the laborers of Texas from becoming, for the first time, enslaved.

Nor could they do it for the sake of preventing an increase of political strength to the slave power in the United States. They can not bow down to a *smaller* demon, as a base and unwise means of keeping their necks from under the yoke of a *greater* one. Still less will they seek to propitiate the *same* great fiend, by lifting at his ear, when he most clamorously demands their aid! If the position of the Liberty party, in these respects, is not properly appreciated, understood, and honored, it must be by those who either have no correct moral principles themselves, or who have failed to learn the greatest lesson of finite wisdom—the highest point of true political sagacity, to wit: the safety of shaping our *measures* in strict conformity with *first principles*, and the certain ruin attendant on an abandonment of these principles, and a resort to the chess-board of adroitly managed *expedients*, in their stead.

Not less bright and cheering is the light shed by the principles of the Liberty party, on the course it shall pursue, in case of the ultimate annexation of Texas to the United States. Such an act, being a violation of the Constitution, and not legally nor morally binding, might be annulled whenever the party should come into power, as it *may* do, before the growth of Texas, with its political power, could prevent. Or, if the two nations acquiesce in the proposed union, and it becomes cemented in fact, the Liberty party, in power, only finds the sphere of its legitimate jurisdiction enlarged! Let the Texan slaveholders understand that annexation to the United States, is annexation to a country under whose original Declaration of national existence, and fundamental constitution of government, slaveholding is unlawful, and its legal validity impossible! Let them know that a growing party holding these views is already in the field, and will probably soon hold the reins! Then let them accept of annexation if they choose!

DISSOLUTION OF THE UNION.

The principles of the Liberty party, therefore, can not fail to regulate its position in regard to the continuance of our national Union. That Union was formed for the sole purpose of PROTECTING HUMAN RIGHTS, and has no value any farther than as it can be made a *means* for obtaining and securing THAT END. To ask of a true Liberty party that it shall sacrifice the END to the preservation of the MEANS, and compromise human rights to prevent a dissolution of the Union, would be to ask of it an act of suicide, as well as of self-contradiction, absurdity, and idolatrous attachment to a thing of no real worth. And when the "Union" shall have become "destructive of these ends"—then, in the truthful language of our national Declaration of Independence, "it becomes the right, as it is the duty, of the people to throw off such a government." Nor would this, of necessity, involve scenes of carnage and blood. Let the non-slaveholding States cease to send representatives to Congress, to vote in national elections, and refuse paying duties on imports, and they cease to be members of the present Union, of course. And no attempt to coerce them would be made.

This the non-slaveholding States are morally bound to do, unless their political connection with the present Union can enable them, in some way, to bring about the abolition of slavery.

If the Federal Constitution contained a "guaranty" of slavery, as some suppose, or even such a "compromise" as secured that abominable system of despotism from the action of the Federal Government, organized to "establish justice" and "secure the blessings of liberty," then, manifestly, a radical amendment of the Constitution would need to be made, or it would become a burden and a nuisance too intolerable for the endurance of a Christian and free people. Thus much, the Liberty party ought distinctly and boldly to say; but before it proceeds farther to hoist the flag of disunion, it should diligently inquire whether the *facts* of the case are such as to require or even warrant such a course, in the present juncture of affairs.

If it be true, as it doubtless is, that the North as well as the South are deeply involved in the guilt of the slave system, and if it be true likewise that the northern or non-slaveholding States, under the present federal arrangements, still hold a controlling power over the entire slave system; not only as existing in the District, Territories, and inter-State slave trade, (which is admitted by all reasonable men,) but likewise, either directly or indirectly, over the slave system, in all the slave States; then have the non-slaveholding States no moral right to desert the slaves, in the hour of their utmost need, and leave them to the tender mercies of their taskmasters, until all *practicable efforts* have been made in view to their relief.

Be it so—as it doubtless is—that the liberties of the non-slaveholding States can not be permanently maintained, in connection with slave States, it remains true that they have no moral right to seek their own exclusive security, by cutting themselves loose from their equal brethren who are enslaved at the South, and crushed by a petty oligarchy, while there is hope in their case. In estimating the sacredness of the obligations which bind us to the South, it is chiefly the OPPRESSED MAJORITY, white and colored, and not merely the insignificant MINORITY of 250,000 slaveholders, whose claims upon us require to be especially examined. And the Liberty party, believing, as it doubtless does, that the political power of the free States is adequate, in some way, to the emancipation of the enslaved, and professing likewise to "remember them that are in bonds as bound with them," would contradict its own FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES, should it follow those who are sounding a *retreat* from the contest, in the form of "disunion," at the very moment when a glorious victory is apparently awaiting them. Our business, as a component and a controlling portion (as we trust) of this great nation, is not to abdicate the government, but to administer it. Guilty as we are in yielding to a false interpretation of the Constitution, and to a cruel misapplication of its power that has so long crushed the slave, we can no more wash our hands in innocence, "by a dissolution of the Union," than the controlling partner in a slave ship or on a slave plan-

tion can become guiltless by selling out his stock to his partner, or making him a present of it, leaving the slaves in their chains?

And besides, the Liberty party can as easily persuade the people of the North to exert their political power for the abolition of slavery, and (in that way) the preservation of the Union, as to persuade them, on the grounds of the evils of slavery, to terminate the Union itself. The same political power that could do the one could do the other; and the same love of liberty and detestation of oppression that would dissolve the Union, to protect the liberties of the white man, would wield the power of the Union, to protect the WHITE AND THE COLORED, ALIKE.

CLASS LEGISLATIONS—MONOPOLIES.

With equal precision and certainty do the principles of the Liberty party indicate the position it should assume, on every other question arising within the legitimate field of free government. There can be nothing *partizan*, selfish, or sectional, in its objects, or measures, if its *principles* are to be its guide. Against all such political activity, it must steadfastly set its face. It must be neither a Northern party nor a Southern party—a white man's party nor a colored man's party—a rich man's party nor (except as he may need more protection) a poor man's party, an employer's party nor a laborer's party, a planter's party or a servant's party, a slave's party or a freeman's party, but holding ALL alike to be free and *protecting* all as equal and free men. It must neither be an agricultural party, nor a manufacturing party, a landholder's party nor a tenant's party, a merchant's party nor a consumer's party, a money-lender's party nor a money-borrower's party, a cotton-grower's party nor a wheat-grower's party, a cotton-spinner's party nor a flax-spinner's party, a wool-grower's party nor a turnip-grower's party, a shoe-black's party nor a shoe-wearer's party, a wood-sawyer's party nor a wood-consumer's party.

It must legislate, not for *castes* and *classes*, but for MEN, and for all men ALIKE. It must create NO MONOPOLIES and sustain and recognize none.

It must promote the *interests* of the people, simply and solely by protecting their *individual* and *original* rights against unlawful aggressions, not by directing them *how* to get rich, nor by *legislating* them either into importers or manufacturers, or producers. It must show no partiality either to the "*great* interests of the country"—(the interests of the men of great wealth)—nor to the *little* interests of the country, the interests of those who, with little or no capital, earn their daily bread by their daily toil. As it must not tax the cloth *manufacturer* for the benefit of the cloth *wearer*, so neither must it tax the cloth *wearer* for the benefit of the cloth *manufacturer*. As it must not tax the grower for the benefit of the consumer, so neither must it tax the consumer for the benefit of the grower. It must not impair, in any direction, or in any degree, the original and natural right of a single individual, however humble, for the benefit of any class of men, however

numerous or however useful—not even for any estimated "best good of the whole." It must neither control the literature nor the religion nor the industry of the people, but leave them free to *study* as they please, *worship* as they please, and *work* as they please, taking care simply, that no one of them tramples upon the equal rights of his neighbor. Essential as are intelligence, religion and industry to the welfare of a people and to the exigence of a free government, they are the priceless jewels that the government can not create, and can not mend, though they may mar, for "no free State was ever upheld wholly by its own coercive power."

PROTECTIVE TARIFF AND FREE TRADE.

Can it be doubted that these positions are involved in the principles avowed by the Liberty party hitherto! Or can it be difficult to foresee the course, that such a party, if remaining true to its principles, must ultimately take, in respect to the question of protective tariff or free trade?

Abolitionists, including Liberty party men, have always stigmatized the slave system as being the most odious and grinding "MONOPOLY" in the land—as unjust *because* legislating for the benefit of one particular caste or class at the expense of another—as anti-republican because it creates and sustains castes and classes. They have denied the moral right of governments (State or National) to uphold this monopoly and these castes. They have decried that any real, or supposed pecuniary benefits, individual or public, could warrant the infraction of the rights of the enslaved. They have insisted on the immediate and unconditional restoration of their original and inalienable right to the disposal and the direction of their *own* industry, rejecting, indignantly, the pretension that the government may *take care* of them, and direct their industry, and provide for them, on the ground that they *can not take care of themselves!*

How then can the Liberty party, with any show of impartiality and consistency, do otherwise than to repudiate *all* monopolies, and castes, and class legislations, whether bearing upon white men at the North, or colored at the South? If the slave has a right to dispose of his own labor, has not every other man the same right, including, of course, the right to dispose of the avails of his labor in whatever market he chooses? If the slaves may be trusted to "*take care of themselves*" in this matter, are our free citizens to be told that they need the "PROTECTIVE" superintendence of the government over their concerns? That the pecuniary affairs of the nation would suffer shipwreck if each individual were permitted to decide for himself whether to manufacture his clothing or buy it—whether to buy it of his next door neighbor or of one who should supply him cheaper from a distance?

It is well known that our *northern* operatives have never asked nor desired such protection any more than have the Southern. They dread the high prices of cotton fabrics, as the slave dreads

the high price of cotton and sugar. It is the well known signal for *more labor* and curtailed privileges without a corresponding increase of COMPENSATION in return.

The capitalists concerned in manufactures can derive no benefit from a protective tariff, any further or any *longer* than they receive the unjust tax levied upon consumers for their special benefit. And when by the stimulus of artificial legislation, any particular product of agriculture or of manufacture is increased beyond the natural demand, a ruinous reaction ensues, not unfrequently involving in a general bankruptcy the very class for whose benefit the unjust bounty was granted. On this ground, from the first, the most substantial, prudent and sagacious manufacturers, to a great extent, have been opposed to the policy altogether. To compete with the pauper labor of Europe by creating (and by similar methods) a rival pauper population at home, must prove as ruinous in political economy, as it is unjust and merciless in ethics. The present distresses and pending contests in England, distresses introduced by tariffs and class legislations—and contests of the oppressed masses, against them, should be a beacon to warn us, in due season. Similar distresses, oppressions, and conflicts, already rising, in our own boasted New-England, may furnish us with illustrations nearer home. Already the slaveholder points (and not without some occasion) to our "white slaves of the North." And already the *growers* and the *manufacturers* of cotton are finding their affinities for each other, as lords over laborers, and are preparing to coalesce.

A tariff for *protection* we need not discuss largely; since the discerning leaders of both the great parties perceiving the rising sentiment of the country against it, have found it necessary to disclaim any higher rates than are required by the *necessities of the revenue*, both the rival parties expressing themselves in nearly the same terms.

TARIFF FOR REVENUE.

The *real* question of "free trade" which must at no distant day become a prominent political question in this country, is the question whether the national revenue shall be supplied by direct taxation or by duties on imports. The framers of our present Constitution very manifestly contemplated (to say the least) the large preponderancy of *direct* taxation over *duties*. On no other supposition could the non-slaveholding States ever have consented to an interpretation of the Constitution giving the slave States a *disproportionate representation* on condition of their bearing the burdens of a *direct* taxation according to the *same ratio*. Availing themselves of their *political* advantage, the slaveholders with characteristic adroitness soon shaped the *policy* of the country in such a manner as to slip their necks out of the *pecuniary* equivalent they had stipulated to *pay* for their predominance; for slaveholders understand the art of eluding any *payments* for services rendered! To this fact, doubtless, the country is indebted for the prevalence of the doctrine that the national reve-

nue must be supplied by the receipts of the Custom House. Unwilling at times, to pay any thing, even the form of duties, the slaveholders (or rather the rabid portion of them) have clamored for free trade. Whenever the North shall learn the policy of giving it to them, in full measure, subjecting them to a direct tax on their twelve hundred millions of slave property, they will be in a position to study the policy of striking this twelve hundred millions of dollars from the rateable list, transforming three millions of human beings from the position of *taxable property* to that of *tax-paying men*! As a peaceful, available, and unquestionably constitutional instrumentality against slavery—(if *indirect* measures are to be selected,) the abrogation of Custom House duties presents claims which need only to be examined, in order to their being held of incomparable value. Such a process the slave system could with difficulty survive, for a single year.

To object, as some do, that the people in general would never consent to pay, in the form of a *direct tax* what they now pay in *duties* without perceiving it, is only to say, in other words, that if the people knew and realized the enormous amount of taxes which they pay to support unnecessary expenditures, they would soon terminate the imposition, which they doubtless would do, and this is one grand reason why it should be done. For we hold it a slander on the people to say that they are so *stupid* as to prefer paying fifty dollars, as an annual cash tax on merchandize through the Custom House, rather than pay a ten or twenty direct tax to a tax gatherer: or that they are so *unpatriotic* as to refuse paying (and with their eyes open) the amount really needed. The cheerful support of the *State Government*, by direct taxes, (chiefly) though much heavier than they need be, is a sufficient refutation of the slander.

The whole system of duties on imports, will be found, on examination, to be one of the most gross and stupendous systems of deception and injustice ever inflicted upon the masses, by the few whose business and maxim it is, to fleece the people as much as they can, and by a process which shall prevent them from knowing when, how, or how much!

What farmer or mechanic—what individual head of a family—can tell, or can form a tolerable conjecture, how much he pays the national government in a single year? Not the smallest purchase of foreign merchandize can he make without paying a tax. The unnoticed tax gatherer comes to-day—comes to-morrow—comes every day in the year. At morning, at noon, and at evening, he sits invisible at the family table, and slyly pockets his pence, abducted from every mouthful that is swallowed. Not a rag of cloth can a member of the family wrap round him in winter or summer, by night or by day, without paying a tax. Intelligent foreigners who visit us, smile at our simplicity and call us the people that are taxed without knowing it; who groan under "*hard times*" without "*guessing*" the reason—who call ourselves the freest people on the earth, but must ask leave of our government whether we may hoe corn or spin

cotton; who watch the newspapers and the days in the year to know whether a vote in Congress or State Legislature—a Governor's Message or a President's—will not make us bankrupts—and exile us to the woods, or to the poor-house!—A people who have concluded that they do not know whether it is best for them to buy goods cheap or dear, and must keep two voracious legislatures under pay, half the time, to tell them; or to say who may lend money (or rather their own promissory notes,) to such persons as may wish to hire of them!

Do the PRINCIPLES of the *Liberty party* supply no touch-stone by which such schemes of legislation may be tested? No remedy for the evils they have introduced!

And what character have those principles to bestow upon that feature of the Custom House taxation by which the tax payers are compelled to pay, *not* according either to their *capitals*, their *incomes*, or their possible *earnings*, but according to the number of *mouaths*, whether of rich or poor, that have to be fed—or the number of backs that have to be protected from the cold? Is it to be tolerated, forever, and without censure, by the advocates of equal rights, by the friends of the poor, that the wealthiest man in community is compelled to pay no more into the national treasury than the poorest, that is comfortably clothed and fed?

The *demoralizing* nature and tendency of all Custom House systems, in all nations, is a still more serious and insuperable objection against such arrangements. As no people have ever yet been found so undiscerning as not to feel the grievous wrong done to them in the invasion (by the government that should protect them) of their original right to buy where they please: so no nation has been found in which the "Custom House oath" was not proverbially and almost universally regarded as having no binding moral force; and where the laws were not evaded to the full extent to which the wit of man, sharpened by avarice and hunger, is competent. Nor has any nation yet succeeded in securing the aid of under officers, tide waiters, &c. &c., who were not, to a fearful extent, accessible to bribery, and, as a class, participants in the perpetration of revenue frauds. The most painfully graphic descriptions of embezzlement and deception, on record, are those connected with the importation of goods. On all the seaboard districts of mercantile nations, the business of smuggling becomes one of the settled avocations of a large portion of the people, and few who are at all connected with maritime or mercantile affairs in our seaports, can claim that they do not, in some way, connive in the process. Not all the power and vigilance even of the British Government and British Navy have ever sufficed even to put any considerable check to the business of smuggling, in which so much capital and so many thousands and tens of thousands of persons are engaged.

Then look at the comparative expenses of collecting this Custom House national tax. Put down the actual receipts at twenty-five millions of dollars. But who can estimate the probable expenses of the Custom House establishment?

In the single city of New-York alone, above one thousand men are constantly employed in this business. The chief man, the collector, is said to have realized a much higher annual income than the President of the United States. Every seaport town in the nation, must have its Custom House establishment, in proportion to its business. Then come the revenue cutters, how many we know not, manned and employed constantly, for the same service. The Navy, the Diplomatic Department, these are chiefly needed to negotiate and to enforce the commercial arrangements not needed on the system of Free Trade.

In 1827, (the Treasurer's Report of which happens to be at hand,) the Custom House receipts were a little short of \$23,000,000
Expenditures for Naval service 4,000,000
Military establishment, nearly 6,000,000
(Of the Custom House and Revenue Cutter expenses, we have no data of estimate.)
Civil, diplomatic and miscellaneous \$2,300,000

Scanty as are our statistics, we have data enough to see that a very large proportion of receipts of the National treasury, through the Custom House, is expended, either in *collecting it*, or in *providing* for its collection, in paying the expense of the legislation, by which, at every session, its details are adjusted, and of the foreign diplomacy needed only by an artificial system of commercial intercourse displacing the natural.

RETRENCHMENT.

We come then by a natural process to that matter of RETRENCHMENT, of which rival parties have promised so much, and accomplished so little. Very evidently no real retrenchment can come, but through the abolition of all those class legislations, monopolies, and artificial systems of commercial intercourse that, of necessity, require vast expenditures in the direction and management of them. Yet strange to tell! We have had parties promising retrenchment whose avowed policy was the increase of all those sources of expenditure from which extravagance proceeds. Sometimes we have had promises of retrenchment most ludicrously coupled with propositions to distribute the surplus revenue among the States, to make room for a proportionate increase of the revenue tariff to supply its place!

Extravagant expenditures, most assuredly, will never be checked, until that system of supplying the national treasury is abandoned that calls for a standing army of legislators for its annual superintendency and perpetual revision—a standing army of Custom House officers for its collection—a naval and military establishment to guard and enforce it—and a regiment of foreign ambassadors to negotiate commercial treaties for its details or to obtain redress for infractions of them. A system whose grand recommendation to public support is—that it taxes the people so *secretly* that they do not detect the amount of its exactions, and to an extent that would goad them into rebellion, if it were attempted to collect it openly and by broad daylight!

Abolish our Custom House system, as the Swiss Republic has, long since, abolished *here*, and the manufacturing interests of this country, no longer bloated into apoplectic plethora, might vie in stability and healthiness with those of Switzerland. Abolish the system, and that retrenchment of national expenditures which is otherwise an impossibility, becomes inevitable, of course. By the common concession (or rather plea) of its advocates, not one-third the present amount of national revenue could be raised by direct taxation, and of consequence would not be expended;—and, very happily, there would remain no occasion nor apology for the disbursement.

The diminished hazards of war, on the policy of free trade, and in an age when wars are mostly for commercial advantages, should be set down as, by far, the largest item of benefit, on the score of pecuniary saving alone. There is nothing connected with national expenditure half so costly as war.

The army and naval establishments, now requiring disbursements, even in time of peace, to the amount varying from one-third to two-thirds of the national revenue, would scarcely find an apology for their continuance, and would, of necessity, be reduced to the lowest possible standard, at once. Military academies, for the costly training, at public expense, of a military nobility to lord it over the people, would soon become obsolete, and standing armies and navies, those graves of republics and nurseries of aristocracy and vice, would, ere long, follow in their train.

Foreign ministers, with an outfit of \$9,000 each, and a salary of \$9,000 per annum more, (scarcely needed now,) would become so manifestly useless then, that the splendid sinecure would be laid aside, except in very rare cases. A simple consul or commercial agent would do the business as well, now, the greater part of the time, and very little business, even for consuls, on the free trade system, would remain to be done.

A congressional session of two months a year, would be amply sufficient to transact all the public business, properly pertaining to our national government, on the principle of free trade, and in the absence of all the class legislations connected with, and growing out of the present system. The business of the chief magistrate, heads of departments, with their clerks, would proportionately decrease.

Salaries thus diminished in number, might also be reduced in amount. The principle should be, to fix the compensation at such a rate that, while it should not exclude the poor man from holding any office in the gift of the people, by leaving him without due support, should not make it an object of pecuniary speculation, as it now is—to seek after office—nor supply the public servants with the means of corruption and bribery while in office, nor tempt them to ape the magnificence of monarchical and aristocratic courts—and indulge in anti-republican luxury and show.

For the President \$10,000 to \$15,000 per annum, should suffice, instead of \$25,000. For

members of Congress \$5 per day instead of \$8— and other functionaries in proportion. The rage of party spirit should no longer be stimulated, as it has been, by the scramble for extra lucrative employ.

EXECUTIVE PATRONAGE

Would no longer remain as formidable an abuse as it now is. The prospects of a foreign embassy would not so disgracefully dazzle, corrupt, and warp the representatives of the people, and lead them astray.

Add to this that the principles of the Liberty party, when faithfully applied, would require the election of all or nearly all the officers of the government—particularly the “heads of departments,” by the people, direct. And the Post Office establishment, if remaining in the government’s hands, should be subjected to the same rule.

The President and Vice President, without the intervention of Electors, should be chosen by the people themselves. For the introduction of these salutary changes, the laws and the Constitution should undergo the requisite amendments.

In the State, counties and towns, similar retrenchments and reforms should be made.

In the State of New-York, it is said that one thousand offices are in the gift of the Chief Magistrate! What a source of corruption is here! Let these abuses be reformed, and the swarms of locusts now thronging the seats of State and National Governments, fit tools of corruption and servility, will disappear.

JUDICIARY REFORM.

The abuses, monopolies, and perversions of justice, so long a matter of almost hopeless complaint, can be reached and removed only by a party who understand the whole business of a civil government to be comprised in the “executing of judgment between a man and his neighbor.” So long as governments busy themselves with that which does not belong to them, so long, of course, will they neglect their own appropriate work. Take away from our governments their princely revenues, their class legislations, their monopolies, that now occupy all their attention, and they will perhaps find time to provide for the people a Judiciary System that the people can use and understand. The time, then, may come, when the law will be used for the administration of justice—not for the emolument of a privileged caste—when it may be used for the benefit of the poor, the defrauded, the oppressed, the wronged—and not for the almost sole purpose of legalizing the depredations of fraud, assisting the rich to grind the faces of the poor—providing another swarm of useless and idle officials, to be supported by the hard earnings of the people—and all by a system of jargon originating in the dark ages, in which equity is prohibited for the preservation of dead forms.

POLITICAL ETHICS.

The maxim that “all is fair in politics” will fall into disuse, with a Liberty party guided by the principles of equal justice and unchangeable

ble *moral right*. In the selection of candidates for office, intelligence and moral worth—*not* wealth nor standing in artificial society will supply the standard—the best instead of the “most available” candidate—the most competent *among* the competent—not the “least of two evils,” will be the result! The voter will vote his *own* conscientious convictions, and not the bidding of his party. The right of *suffrage* will be understood to include the right of *nomination*, and the latter will no sooner be relinquished than the former. No nominating Convention, however respectable, and however equitably appointed may be its representation, will ever be understood as holding any thing more than a recommendatory power:—and it will hold *no monopoly* of the right of recommending, nor supersede either before or after its sittings, the right, the duty, and the privilege of the humblest among the people, to *recommend* such candidates as they judge proper. The obtaining of nominations at Conventions by the process of secret wire-pulling, will be effectually checked by the conviction that the voters will think and act for themselves, like honest men. Nominations when made by Conventions will be made in those Conventions, and in the restraining presence of the *masses*, men, women, and children, assembled to witness, and *not* in secret cabals of committees apart by themselves. In a word, the corrupt and despotic reign of *King Caucus* will come to an end, and the entire system of “log-rolling,” or barter trade legislation, would share the same fate.

THE PUBLIC LANDS,

If practicable, will be distributed, gratuitously, to temperate, industrious settlers, in small parcels—and not sold on speculation, either by the government or its favorites.

NATIONAL DISPUTES

Would be equitably and magnanimously adjusted by negotiation or arbitration, without a resort to arms. And the false patriotism of national selfishness, seeking the wealth or aggrandizement of our country at the expense of another, would be scouted as still more mean and disgraceful, in a great nation, than in the walks of private life. The *UNIVERSAL BROTHERHOOD OF THE RACE* would be cherished and honored as the foundation principle of international intercourse, and of international *law*.

THE POLICY

Of adopting these measures we need not largely discuss. We recognize *no* policy but that of *doing right*—and we hold the course to be wisest that includes the most of moral rectitude; that applies in the greatest number of directions, and with the greatest fidelity, the self-evident principles of inalienable human rights. In doing this, we apprehend, the sum total of true political sagacity consists.

Shall we be told? (doubtless we shall!) that the anti-slavery enterprise cannot afford to carry the *LOAD* of so many innovations and reformations at once!

We answer: The anti-slavery enterprise cannot longer afford to carry the *load* of the *INCONVENIENCES* involved in a hesitancy to apply our

principles wherever they should be applied! This load it is high time to shake off: and to seize not the *load* but the *lever* of a full and thorough democratic reformation in its stead!

The old parties are both sinking into contempt simply for their *neglect* of the honest course we recommend. The one claims to be “democratic,” but limits its democracy by the hue of the *skin!* The “*LOAD*” of too much democracy, at once, forsooth! it can not afford! And so it allies itself to the slave power, for the good of the *whites*; and tramples the white man’s right of petition in the mire, as the *result* of its very prudent, conservative course! In other directions, too, it mocks the *poor white man’s* cries for redress. Monopolies and class legislations it can loudly decry, yet eagerly sustain! In the selection of a Presidential candidate it can lay the free North prostrate at the feet of the all-enslaving South! It can faintly clamor, for a day, at the prostration of civil and political liberty in Rhode Island, and then tamely succumb as the slaveholder bids. No marvel that this pretendedly democratic party is deserted by many among its most ultra democratic members, who, as a choice of two evils, or by way of experiment, throw themselves, half-despairing, into the arms of the Whigs!

Of the *Whig* party, what shall we say? Taking its name from its professions of hostility to *High Tory prerogative!* Complaining of executive patronage and executive power—promising retrenchment and a limitation of the Presidency to one term: And yet clamorous for those very same class legislations, upon which High Tory power fattens, and Executive patronage revels, and extravagant expenditure becomes inevitable and perpetual! The “party of progress,” yet courting the conservators of aristocratic monopoly and usurpation! The champion of the right of petition—the opponent of Texas annexation, (i. e. that is in some parts of the country)—yet demanding, like its rival, the elevation of a slaveholding chief magistrate! Conjuring the country to assist it in terminating the aggressions of the slave power in the person of John C. Calhoun, and then making him, by Senatorial acclamation, Secretary of State! Denouncing the Executive usurpations of President Tyler, and then, throughout all the ranks, (from Henry Clay downwards,) exulting in the greatest of all his usurpations, his interference for the suppression of “a republican form of government” in Rhode Island, for the openly avowed object of suppressing popular sovereignty at the South! Very evidently, too, the Whig party, (like the Democratic,) “can not afford the load” of conforming its practices to its professed principles! And thus the country is left in a waiting posture, inquiring whether there is ever to be any party in this country that *can* afford the burden of being truly democratic and honest. Shall the Liberty party decline the service, and leave it for other hands?

Assuredly it will not, if it regards either its principles, its professions, or the claims of the enslaved! Fifty-six years of experiment, under our present Constitution, have fully settled the impracticability of abolishing slavery, except

by a party that can "bear the load" and wield the lever of a thorough democracy, applied wherever democratic principles can be made to apply. Of the prospects of relief to the enslaved from the "old Democratic party," falsely so called, it were idle to say a word. Professing no regards for any except white freedom, it presents no claim to the support of the friends of the enslaved.

And all the great parties opposed to the so called "Democratic party" have equally failed to bring relief to the slaves. Under Washington and the elder Adams, the party known as *Federalists* arose and bore rule. A more honest, respectable, moral, and religious *anti-democratic* party in politics, the world has, perhaps never seen. The *Federalists* never *professed* to confide, fully, in the capacity of man for self-government, and they could not be expected to make a special exception in favor of the enslaved colored man! No national measures in favor of the enslaved were adopted during their twelve years of continuous power. The law of 1793, for returning fugitives from slavery, was among the early measures of that party, under its most venerated and popular leader, thus early directing the policy of the country in favor of the slave system. As the Democratic party, triumphant in Mr. Jefferson's election, could "afford to bear no heavier load" than the advocacy of white freedom, in defence against Federal aggressions, so the Federal party, on their part, were sufficiently occupied with their own conservative aims. The "monstrous alliance" of "democracy" with the slave power could not indeed escape their notice. And among the available topics of declamation with the rising aristocracy of the North, (by whom the Federal party was now wielded,) the abomination of slavery had a somewhat prominent place. But the people would not again trust them with power. Had they done so, there is no reason to think that their philanthropy would have overcome their fear that so many ignorant men "let loose, could not take care of themselves." No aristocratic party, in power, would adventure such an experiment.

The "National Republican" party, under Monroe and John Q. Adams, neither attempted nor did any thing on behalf of the enslaved. The famous Missouri Compromise was made under Monroe. The subsequent history of the parties, Whig and Democratic, we need not repeat.

The bottom line of our more than half century experiment, then, may be summed up in a single word. A Democratic party pledged only for the support of white liberty, can not protect the rights of the *free*. A party denouncing slavery, and sustained by the northern aristocracy, can do nothing for the deliverance of the enslaved. It could not, even while the northern and the southern aristocracy were pitted against each other, as rivals. Still less can it, now, when the northern and southern aristocracy, (shaking hands over huge bales of raw cotton and cotton fabrics, are learning how to coalesce! This latter party, a northern democracy will not entrust with power. Its rival they can not trust without being deceived and betrayed!

The policy of a democratic alliance with the slavocracy of the South, therefore, has its full counterpart in the folly of an anti-slavery sympathy at the feet of the aristocracy of the North! An aristocracy whose "gentlemen of property and standing" first mob abolitionists to gain southern votes, and then demand the votes of abolitionists for protecting them from the South!

Let the true friends of Liberty, irrespective of caste or color, come together. Here only is the true and safe ground. As no anti-slavery party can succeed without the democratic voice of the northern masses—so those masses can find no protection from a northern aristocracy, under leaders who sell themselves and their constituents, for the patronage of southern tyrants.

A Liberty party, no longer regarded as an offshoot of the old Federal stock, and a branch of the Whigs, would not lack public support, nor suffer the intolerable disgrace of being courted, as allies, by the conservators of monopolies and class legislation, which the working men will never sustain.

The leaders of the misnamed "Democratic party" would find themselves distanced—their ranks broken—their strength withered—their cheat detected—their game gone.

The Whig party, already confessedly powerless without anti-slavery support, would greedily grasp at a fraternal union with the "Old Hunkers," that they now so truthfully call corrupt.

The white victims of the "peculiar" oligarchy at the South, would find the Liberty party a refuge for the white, as well as the colored poor of the land.

In short, the old party lines would be broken up. Aristocracy and Slavery, on the one hand. Democracy and Abolition on the other, would present the new and the true issues. The "monstrous alliances" between philanthropy and aristocracy, on the one hand, and between human chattelhood and democracy, on the other, would both vanish, like ghosts at day dawn. The Satanic skill of combining opposites would be, at length, baffled. Moral affinities would, once more, discharge their proper functions. An open field and fair play would ensure the speedy triumph of the right.

The experiment has now fully tested the impracticability of retaining the partials of class legislation in our ranks. were it never so desirable to do so. In every returning hour of trial and of need, they desert to the enemy.

Having, long ago, ascertained that the bulwarks of American slavery are at the North, and that the aristocracy of the free States constitute the main props of the slave power, it is high time to carry the war directly into the enemy's camp, and overthrow that aristocracy itself, by whom we have been alternately mobbed and wheedled, courted and maligned, cheated and gagged. The enslaved laborers of the South will thus be emancipated by the white laborers of the North and South combined, before a system of class legislation has quite reduced them to the condition of serfs.